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Salt Lake City, 23 June

22 June 1983

THE SOVIET THREAT

I. The Soviet Military Effort

The USSR has been engaged in a major buildup of its military force for more than two decades. Under Khrushchev the emphasis was on strategic nuclear programs, and under Brezhnev there has been an across-the-board expansion and modernization of all the Soviet forces. This effort is continuing under Andropov.

Since 1965, annual military spending in the USSR has nearly doubled in real terms and now consumes over one-eighth of GNP. Military manpower has increased by one third to more than five million. Defense research and development facilities have greatly expanded.

The Soviets see their growing military strength as providing the backdrop and the most visible evidence of their prowess as a superpower. They take pride in the fact that the US was forced to negotiate with them as a nuclear equal in SALT. Moreover, they are now able to compete with the US for political-military influence in the Third World.

Strategic Systems

The Soviets have achieved strategic nuclear capabilities widely perceived to be at least equal to ours. The number of Soviet delivery vehicles has increased to about 2,500, compared with the US total of just over 2,000.

-- The Soviet force now consists of modern, accurate ICBMs, which in a theoretical well-executed first strike could destroy most of our Minuteman silos today, and nearly all of them by the mid-1980s. The US would still be able to retaliate, however, with Poseidon and Trident SLBMs and B-52 and FB-111 bombers. By hardening their own land-based missile launchers and putting a greater number of ballistic missiles on submarines, the Soviets have made their own strategic forces increasingly survivable.

And there has been no letup in their drive to develop and deploy improved strategic attack weapons of virtually every type. By the mid-1980s we expect initial deployment of new MIRVed missiles with the Typhoon submarine, sea-and-air-launched cruise missiles, solid propellant ICBMs for mobile deployment, and a new long range B-1 type bomber.

Soviet planners also emphasize defense against strategic weapons, but technical limitations and treaty constraints render them largely ineffective against a US retaliatory strike.

-- They are upgrading missile defenses at Moscow, constructing new large radars and developing new ABM systems and components. This will give them several options for widespread ABM deployment in the late 1980s and 1990s should they choose to cease honoring the 1972 ABM treaty.

-- Even if a widespread missile defense potentially could be overcome by an attacking force, it would make it more

difficult for the US to effectively carry out a retaliatory strike.

- Regarding strategic air defenses, we estimate that by the mid-1980s the Soviets will have sufficiently modernized their systems--interceptors, SAMS, and AWACs--to improve their now limited abilities to engage low-altitude bombers and cruise missiles.
- Defense against missile-launching submarines remains poor despite its high priority in naval planning, because the search and detection capabilities of Soviet forces are insufficient to locate submarines in the open ocean.
- The Soviets give continuing attention to civil defense, but their economic, military facilities and urban centers are still vulnerable.

The magnitude of Soviet space programs gives ominous indications of future military applications.

- They already have an antisatellite system which can destroy or interfere with certain US satellites, and they are working on others.
- We see permanently manned space stations performing a variety of military-related missions ranging from command and control to weapons R&D. We also see space-based directed-energy weapons for strategic defense as a long-term objective.

At the theater level, the deployment of SS-20 IRBMs and Backfire bombers has created a direct challenge to US nuclear security guarantees to Europe and is causing unease among our

allies in Asia. Further, the Soviets have eroded the West's edge in short-range nuclear delivery systems in Europe. The number of Soviet tactical surface-to-surface missiles there has increased by a third, and the number of tactical aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons throughout Western Europe has more than tripled. They have broken the monopoly held by NATO since the 1960s in nuclear artillery and have introduced other new tactical delivery systems.

-- With these improvements, Soviet theater forces are now in a better position to match any NATO escalation of a European conflict from one level of nuclear war to another, without using long-range theater nuclear systems based in the USSR.

However, their doctrine and planning suggests that they believe that a nuclear conflict would escalate quickly to include USSR-based weapons.

-- At the same time, we believe they have the capabilities to destroy or interfere with most major elements of NATO's warning and attack assessment system, and may be able to severely degrade command and control of our theater nuclear forces.

Their emphasis on hardened, mobile and redundant command, control and communications (C³) suggest that the Soviets are attempting to prepare their leaders and military forces for the possibility of having to fight a protracted nuclear war, and are training to be able to maintain control over increasingly complex conflict situations. Nevertheless, they are well aware that the

course of a nuclear conflict will probably not go according to plan, and that the outcome could be disastrous for either side. But they believe that preparations in force structure, doctrine and training to continue operations after a nuclear attack will limit damage and raise the prospects for a favorable outcome.

Overriding these force development programs, the Soviets emphasize command, control, and communications as critical to nuclear warfighting. They are striving to ensure command systems survivability through hardening, mobility and redundancy.

To the extent that Soviet intercontinental nuclear forces now check those of the US, and Soviet gains in theater nuclear forces have offset those of NATO, the balance of conventional forces in Europe has become increasingly significant.

Conventional Forces

In the conventional area, the Soviets expanded their already large ground, theater air and naval forces during the 1965-80 period and introduced modern systems, some of them equal or superior to those of NATO.

Warsaw Pact forces now outnumber NATO by 2 to 1 in divisions and tanks and 2 1/2 to 1 in combat aircraft. The Warsaw Pact divisions are smaller, but they are more heavily armed. Since the mid 1960s the Soviets have widened the numerical disparity and eroded the qualitative edge NATO once had. Warsaw Pact manpower has grown by nearly 300,000 men and 7,000 main battle tanks and 7,000 artillery pieces have been added.

-- The number, variety and capability of air defense systems available to tactical commanders has increased rapidly,

with deployment of all-weather missile-equipped interceptor aircraft and mobile air defense missiles and guns.

-- The latest Soviet tank models (now common to most first-line Soviet units opposite NATO, but not yet widely deployed among units in other areas) have frontal armor that provides good protection against most Western antitank weapons.

-- New tactical aircraft deployed in the 1970s have increased ninefold the weight of ordinance that Soviet theater air forces could deliver against targets in NATO's rear areas. More accurate bombing systems (radars, laser rangefinders, and computers) and precision munitions have improved Soviet capabilities against point targets and largely eliminated NATO's rear areas as sanctuaries in conventional war.

Most of these improvements have been made to Soviet forces. Moscow's East European allies have not grown as fast and have more equipment which is obsolete relative to that of the Soviets and NATO. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union would depend heavily on its Pact allies, which supply about half the combat divisions that would be used in the early stages of a war with NATO.

-- Poland would provide at least 15 of these divisions, about a quarter of the Pact's forces, during the first stage of an offensive against NATO. Furthermore, Poland controls

critical lines of communications between the Pact's forward based forces and Moscow's primary reinforcement base.

-- Events in Poland over the past couple years may have shaken Moscow's confidence in Poland's reliability in a war with NATO, but they probably are encouraged by the Polish military's enforcement of martial law.

In addition to the buildup of intermediate-range nuclear forces in the Far East, the Soviets also maintain large conventional forces opposite China--about a quarter of their total combat divisions. Since the mid-1960s, the number of Ground Force divisions along the Sino-Soviet border has tripled and their total manpower has also more than tripled. Much of the overall growth in Soviet military manpower is attributable to this buildup. Expansion of Soviet tactical aviation forces since the late 1960s has also been directed primarily at China.

In the early 1960s, the Soviet Navy was a coastal defense force with limited capabilities for operations in the open ocean, but it is being transformed into a force of heavily armed surface ships, high-speed nuclear-powered submarines, and advanced aircraft.

-- The number of ships has changed little, but the proportion of large surface combatants and nuclear-powered submarines is growing.

Qualitatively, Soviet naval forces remain vulnerable to air and submarine attack and capabilities for distant combat

operations--such as the landing of troops and provision of carrier-based air support--are extremely limited.

- However, their numerous missile-equipped surface ships, submarines, and aircraft enable the Soviets to contest the use of open-ocean areas by the West.

The Technology Race

Although the US leads the USSR in most defense related technologies, there is a constant threat of a Soviet breakthrough in this race which could tip the strategic balance against the US. The Soviets devote a large amount of their resources to acquiring new technologies and developing new weapon systems.

The USSR's "military-industrial complex" now includes:

- Some 200 major weapon research and development (R&D) facilities.
- About 700 additional facilities that perform at least some defense-related research and testing.
- More than 100 plants for the final assembly of weapons.
- Several thousand production facilities for weapon components and support equipment.

The momentum of these programs shows every sign of continuing. We have already identified more than 100 development programs for new or substantially modified weapon systems that could be deployed in the 1980s.

In the area of technology and research, the US Intelligence Community has concluded that the Soviets have manufactured and used lethal mycotoxins in Afghanistan and Indochina. This is a serious challenge to the US and NATO, which currently have a weak chemical

defense capability. Moreover, our retaliatory capability with chemical weapons is out of date and badly in need of modernization.

Since 1980 we have learned that the increasing sophistication, accuracy, and power of Soviet weapons, against which we must defend ourselves, is based on our own expenditures in research and development to a far greater degree than we had ever dreamed.

-- The Soviets conduct a massive far-flung and well organized effort to get technology from the West through trade, theft, illegal purchase, espionage, scientific exchanges and study programs. This has given them a huge free ride on our military R&D and on our civilian technology. We have paid for much of the vastly increased military threat which will now require us to increase our military spending by hundreds of billions of dollars over this decade.

Despite these impressive gains the Soviet military machine is not without limitations. Its weapons systems are becoming more expensive, and coupled with the sagging Soviet economy, represent a growing burden on the Soviet worker. Furthermore as their newer systems become more sophisticated, rates of production appear to be slowing, and many modernization programs which already take well over a decade to complete could be further stretched out.

This creates major logistics and repair problems since several generations of weapons must be simultaneously maintained. There is little hope that the Soviets can escape this burden; they will be

saddled with a military establishment that is always modernizing but never wholly modern.

Regarding manpower and training, the individual Soviet soldier probably is not as well trained as his or her western counterpart. The majority--about two-thirds--of Soviet combat divisions are neither trained or manned to standards the Soviets have set for their forces in Eastern Europe. These divisions, which often have less than a quarter of their wartime strength, are referred to by the Soviets themselves as "not ready" for immediate operations.

Further, falling birth rates in the Western USSR are forcing the Soviet army to look more to the southern and southeastern regions for manpower that traditionally lacked the education and advantages of the ethnic Russians and other Slavs. In part because of doubts of the reliability and capability of minority troops, the Soviets' most critical combat units are currently manned at about 80 percent Slavic. This figure could fall to about 70 percent by 1990. Since many non-Slavs speak Russian poorly, this, aside from potential reliability problems, could lead to command and control difficulties, increased ethnic tensions in units, and gradual slippage in training standards.

II. Soviet Projection into the Third World

The growth in Soviet military power that I have been describing largely has been responsible for the USSR's obtaining superpower status. This in turn has provided opportunities evident

throughout the 1970s and into this decade--to expand its influence and presence throughout the world.

-- Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko is fond of saying "no international problem can now be solved without taking into account the interests of the USSR."

I would like to discuss some of the instruments the Soviets are using to advance their course, particularly in the Third World. Although the record is not without its setbacks, this is the area where the Soviets have scored their biggest gains--and where they pose the most substantial challenge to US interests.

Some of these advances in the 1970s included:

- Hanoi's victory in Vietnam and consolidation of power in all of Indochina.
- New radical regimes in Ethiopia, Angola and Nicaragua.
- Possession of Afghanistan, a Russian goal for over a century.
- US expulsion from Iran. Although Moscow didn't make the Khomeini revolution, it has sought to ensure that it remains fervently anti-US.

Moscow's own military power has played an increasingly important role in advancing Soviet interests in these situations.

- The average number of Soviet naval ships deployed abroad daily rose from seventeen in 1965 to more than 150 in 1982.
- Soviet combat forces are now in Cuba--the brigade--and in Syria--manning the SA-5s that Moscow sent there late last year.

- The invasion of Afghanistan provided graphic evidence of how the Soviet Army can bring Moscow's own version of "stability" to a neighboring country.

Despite this growing Soviet military presence, we should remember that the Soviet capacity to project forces beyond contiguous areas rests with airborne forces, the world's largest. Moscow's capability to project and support those forces beyond contiguous areas, however, is currently constrained by:

- A shortage of long-range transports. They have only enough aircraft to move one airborne division at a time. We estimate it would take them at least several days to airlift an airborne division of 7,000 men and their equipment to the Middle East. They could, of course, mobilize and transport by sea a motorized rifle division with 12,000 men and 200 tanks to the region in three to four weeks.
- Its inability to provide fighter cover for operations far from the USSR. Even if they sent a division--say to Syria--it would be beyond the range of Soviet-based tactical airpower. Without basing aircraft near the intended operational area the Soviets could conduct military operations there only against light opposition . . . and don't think they are anxious to take on the Israelis in those circumstances.

With the increased tension on their southern border, the Soviets probably have examined scenarios calling for the

introduction of Soviet forces into Iran. This would be an easier task because that country borders on the USSR.

-- In the military districts opposite Iran the Soviets maintain 23 divisions, with 13 additional divisions available in their strategic reserve.

-- We estimate that within a month or so they could prepare about half of this force for operations in Iran.

We, therefore, monitor this area closely, even though Soviet military action against Iran seems unlikely at present.

These limited power projection capabilities--as well as the political censure that would follow their use--is why Moscow has been relying on a much more sophisticated mix of political and military tactics in the Third World. This includes employment of surrogates, traditional diplomacy, aid to revolutionary groups, active disinformation measures and extensive arms aid.

All the problems and conflicts around the world do not originate in Moscow to be sure. But the Soviets and their associates are skillful and diligent in finding and exploiting opportunities to weaken the United States and separate it from its friends and allies.

One key element of this approach has been to rely on surrogates and clients to support pro-Soviet regimes with military force. The effectiveness of this approach was first shown in Angola, where the Soviets helped Castro create a government dependent on Soviet support and Cuban troops for survival.

-- Then, thousands of Cuban troops were dispatched to Ethiopia, where they remain.

-- Now we see Moscow employing its agents--the Cubans, Bulgarians and others--to consolidate the hold of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

To Moscow, the advantage of this tactic is that the Soviet hand is once removed. It is a strategy that makes any direct response by the West appear neo-imperialistic.

Another highly effective Soviet approach to the Third World relies on providing weaponry to pro-Soviet governments.

-- Over the last five years Soviet arms sales to the Third World nearly equalled ours. This is a drastic shift from the 1950s and 1960s when the dollar value of Soviet arms sales and services was about one fourth that of the US.

-- Soviet military sales last year were about \$9 billion, up by almost 50 percent from the low level of the year before.

-- Moscow offers better terms and more speedy delivery, although the quality of their equipment, their service and logistic support programs are not nearly as good or extensive as ours.

-- Moscow's ability to quickly meet its clients' needs for arms was shown over the last two years in Cuba, where annual Soviet arms deliveries more than tripled from about 20,000 to over 60,000 tons.

-- The number of Soviet military advisors in the Third World continues to grow, now numbering about 17,500. This is four times as many as in 1965 and double the number in 1975.

-- Arms sales now account for over 15 percent of Soviet hard currency earnings, second only to oil and energy exports.

Moscow also combines traditional diplomacy and subversion to undermine hostile governments and to befriend leftist ones. Several thousand Soviets are assigned to official Soviet installations in the Third World, including a large number of KGB and GRU officers.

-- Moscow is currently supporting, directly or indirectly, insurgents in Namibia, El Salvador and Guatemala.

-- It is providing arms and training to the black nationalist African National Congress, whose goal is the overthrow of the South African government, and to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

But we should keep in perspective that not all is coming up roses for Moscow in the Third World. The USSR has its vulnerabilities there.

-- This has been shown by the ouster of the Soviets from Egypt and Somalia, the failure of their efforts to subvert the democratic process in Jamaica in the late 1970s, and the fact that they bet on the wrong horse during the Rhodesian civil war.

The USSR and its clients are also bogged down in six major counter-insurgency campaigns--in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Nicaragua. We should remember that despite Moscow's pretensions to be a revolutionary power, it is now the world's biggest counter-insurgency power.

-- The Soviets have 105,000 troops in Afghanistan fighting against a tenacious, increasingly well armed insurgency. We don't expect the Soviets to be able to subdue the country for years--if ever.

Moscow's economic strains are also having a telling affect on its Third World activities. Soviet economic assistance--never very big--has shown a steady decline over the past decade. Last year aid to non-Communist LDCs totalled about \$900 million.

-- In his speech last week to the Central Committee Plenum in Moscow, Andropov put Soviet clients on notice that they can't expect to find a thick wallet in Moscow. He said Moscow would give economic support "to the extent of our ability," but that Third World regimes must carry the major burden of their development.

"Active Measures" and the West European Peace Movement

Let me now turn to the final dimension of the Soviet threat that I wish to discuss--that is Moscow's efforts to infiltrate and exploit the European peace movement in the hope of blocking INF deployment in West Europe.

In order to accomplish this specific goal--as well as the full range of other foreign policy objectives throughout the world--the Soviets rely heavily on what they call "active measures," that is, the use of means to influence other than diplomatic, propagandistic and military means. Ultimate approval for their use rests with the Politburo and Central Committee Secretariat; and those carried out clandestinely, of course, are the responsibility of the KGB.

-- Implementation can take the form of political influence operations, planted press items, clandestine radio broadcasts, and similar efforts. The actual operations are carried out by official and quasi-official Soviet representatives, including journalists, scholars and students.

We believe that the Soviet worldwide active measures programs--of which the effort to block INF is but one--and the resources committed to it are sizeable. We calculate, that it would cost our government over \$100 million to duplicate just one of their programs--the 1977-78 anti-neutron bomb campaign.

-- Many of the "active measures" currently being employed in the anti-INF campaign, by the way, are adaptations of those that proved effective in the campaign against the neutron bomb. The intensity of the Soviet anti-INF campaign will grow as deployment approaches later this year.

-- Moscow has instructed West European Communists and the pro-Soviet international organizations to make the anti-INF campaign their foremost concern and has provided funding and political guidance for their peace movement activity.

-- The European Communist parties are to organize anti-nuclear demonstrations and meetings and coordinate their efforts with non-Communist peace activists. Moscow's involvement has been most active with regard to three of

the countries that are slated for deployment of the missiles--West Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

-- The Soviets are utilizing the international front organizations to initiate and direct some of the anti-nuclear activities in Western Europe and to try to attract non-Communist participants to lend credibility to Soviet objectives.

Despite these extensive efforts, the Soviets are also concerned about the growing tendency among West European peace activists to blame the USSR equally with the US for the arms race. We believe that the pressure of rapidly approaching INF deployment dates will induce the Soviets, however, to put these reservations aside in supporting peace movement activities.

Given the urgency of their anti-INF campaign, the Soviets have risked discrediting some West European peace groups through the covert involvement in peace movement activity of Soviet diplomats and other officials abroad.

-- For example, in November, the Dutch press reported that representatives of the Soviet Embassy and trade mission had violated diplomatic rules by getting directly involved in peace movement activities.

The Soviets routinely try to exploit the Western press to advance their peace movement objectives. The left-leaning West German magazine Der Spiegel, for example, is a leader in publishing interviews with the Soviets, particularly on arms control issues. The KGB, usually through front organizations, provides funding for West European media sympathetic to Soviet interests.

Disinformation and forgeries are other "active measures" the Soviets and their allies employ in this and other campaigns.

-- For example, the West German Communist Party may have been involved in fabricating or disseminating a purported official notice that was posted in several areas of Bonn last November alerting citizens to measures concerning the transport of nuclear and conventional weapons through the city. The forgery was intended to intensify public concern about a recent accident involving a Pershing I transporter.

How effective has this massive Soviet program been? It must be noted, in this connection, that strong anti-nuclear movements probably would have developed in all the INF basing countries, except perhaps Italy, even without Soviet or Communist involvement. Nevertheless, the Soviets do profit from existing, indigenous anti-nuclear sentiment generated by heightened East-West tensions and greater public awareness of nuclear weapons programs affecting West European countries.

The most successful tactic the Soviets have employed has been their incessant emphasis, in public and private meetings with West Europeans, on the USSR's ostensible commitment to detente and arms control in contrast to Washington's alleged drive toward "military supremacy." This type of political influence operation is difficult to counter because many West Europeans consider meetings with Soviet officials and local communists as a legitimate means of obtaining information.

- Nevertheless, Western information campaigns aimed at exposing the Soviets' biased analysis and fabrications have undercut the impact of such contacts.
- The Interchurch Peace Council, for example, represents a stronger current in the peace movement in the Netherlands than the Dutch Communist Party, whose influence has diminished further over the past year.
- The largest peace demonstrations have owed more to the organizational efforts of non-Communist groups than to those of the Soviets or their proxies, and conferences sponsored wholly or in part by communist groups often fail to attract broadly representative groups in the peace movement.

Public exposure of groups that clearly are Soviet-oriented or communist-dominated has sensitized other West European peace activists to the threat of the credibility of the movement as a whole. As a result of such publicity, some of the larger peace organizations have become more vigilant against communist attempts to influence them.

- Popular attention to Soviet policies regarding Poland and Afghanistan has encouraged this tendency and promoted debilitating divisions within the peace movement.
- Revelations of forgeries, expulsions of Soviet diplomats, and other disclosures have also discredited Soviet diplomatic and overt propaganda efforts in Western Europe.

In conclusion I want to reemphasize that the Soviet challenge to US interests at home and abroad is broad in space and increasing in sophistication. Soviet military power provides the backdrop as well as some opportunities for influence. Although the Soviets face various limitations, the achievement of strategic parity seems to have made the Soviets more bold in competing for influence in the Third World. The Intelligence Community will continue to devote the majority of its resources to monitoring and warning of Soviet military developments and activities around the world.